WHIRRAKEE

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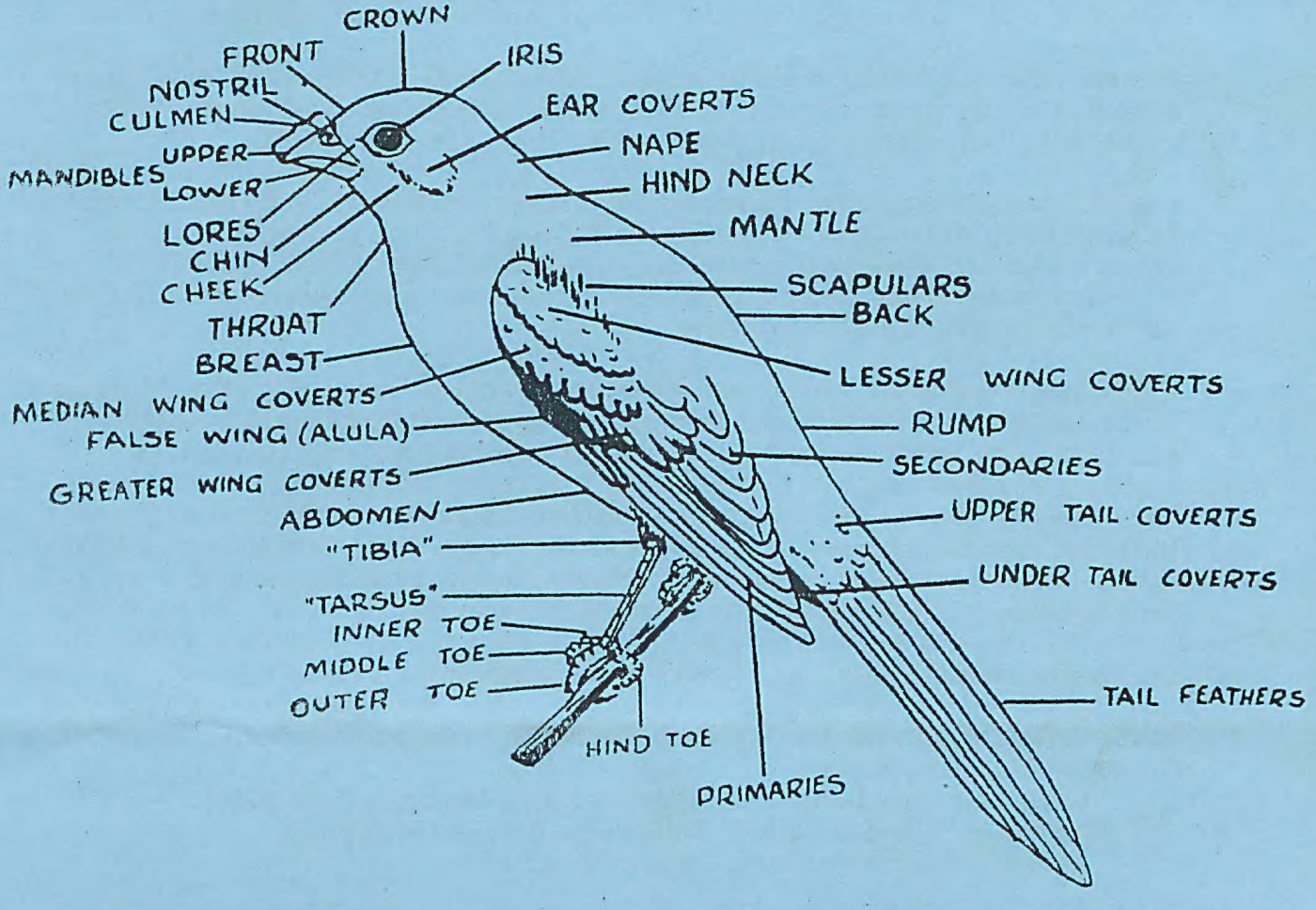

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552

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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34. These rates include GST.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The invited speaker at general meetings starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper.
If a workshop is held prior to the meeting, it will be advertised and it usually starts at 7.00pm.
The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearers listed above, together with the following members:
Kate Lottkowitz; Trevor Marshall; Rob Moors, Jan Orr, Stan Pelczynski; Bob Ruddick

Excursions Excursions are conducted irregularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. In addition to local excursions, campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one active sub-group:

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Front Cover from: Bourke, P.A. 1955. Elementary Bird Study. Paterson Brokensha.pty.Ltd. Perth, W.A. (out of print)

In the spirit of this month's workshop topic, I have included this diagram to entice people to come along and have it explained by Glenise Moors who is conducting the workshop. In Chapter 2 under 'Brawn and Brain' it says, "It seems difficult to believe that anyone could think such free, hot-blooded, active, vital, beautiful creatures as birds could possibly be related to the sluggish, cold-blooded, often repulsive reptiles. But strip a bird of its feathers, or look at some new-hatched nestlings! Aren't they ugly?" Well, come to the workshop and see for yourself!

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 23, No. 5, June 2002

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editors' Note
The contents page of this edition looks very empty. This month, I even had trouble filling a 'thin' edition (11 pages), let alone the normal 15-page standard one. Having to reproduce web pages as fillers is very undesirable and I will not do it on a regular basis, however, I thought the Tasmanian Tiger debate is a very interesting one and worth talking about. What do you think about it all? Should it be attempted? If you think it should be done, do you agree with Mike Archer's sentiments? Another web page article about bird brains complements this month's workshop. Amongst the 'bird bits' we might not get to see a brain and there is obviously more to it than some people have thought...

Good News from Healesville Sanctuary

Information from the Threatened Species Programs, Healesville Sanctuary Victoria

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Thirty-three orange-bellied parrots were released from Healesville Sanctuary in October 1999, 27 in October 2000 and 46 early this October. The latest report from late last year indicates that 30 - 32 birds from the last release were still around the release site and beginning breeding behaviour. This is great because in demonstrated that following early losses, the majority of birds had adapted well to the wild and picked up the necessary survival skills at least for the ensuing breeding season. That pattern of survival has now occurred for each of the three release years.

Half of the birds were held in aviaries at the release site for a month, the second half were released along with the aviary birds in one flock on the day after their arrival at the site. Interestingly, of the birds surviving until mid November 2001, half were from each group. This doesn't mean that 'hard' release is just as good as 'soft' release, because the soft releasees - having been longer acclimatized - may have provided social assistance to the hard releasees when they were all liberated. However, it does indicate that everyone doesn't need to be acclimatized for long periods and this gives us greater flexibility in managing future releases.

The exciting news is that six birds from the 1999 and 2000 releases have now been recorded as having returned to the site to breed. Two of them are birds from 1999 that have now returned for their second year. Thus a growing core of parrots are surviving long-term and clearly succeeding in migrating across Bass Strait (one of them has been seen on the mainland now in each of the two winters).

The very best bit, though, is that one returnee is the offspring of two of last year's releasees and was hatched in the wild. So for the first time at that location the reintroduction program has achieved a truly wild orange-bellied parrot that is surviving out there where they belong.

It is very pleasing that all the hard work has generated the real and growing nucleus of a second breeding population in the wild.

Report from "Rally for our Forests"

by Barbara Pelczynska

The "Rally for Goolengook", (later renamed as "Rally for our Forests") was very successful.

According to the news release by Bev Culvenor and Jason Doyle, published on Monday 21st May, in the *Bendigo Advertiser*, more than 25 people from Bendigo took part - we also met quite a few members of our Club. We had two banners - the now a year old "The Greater Bendigo National Park" one and a new one, "National Park for Box-Ironbark", made for BDEC by Rosemary Porter.

To me, the highlights of the rally were the "Welcome to Country" by the Wurundjeri elder who said that for millennia his people looked after the forests and thanked us for our struggle to protect them, and the speeches by Senator Bob Brown and Professor Bellamy. I found all three very moving and uplifting.

The weather was also good to us, as it did not rain till later that day.

Hopefully the pressure on the Parliament to protect our forests, particularly the Box-Ironbark Forest, will continue till National Parks are established.

Ecological Footprint – The Easter Island Syndrome

Author: Barbara Pelczynska / Bill Rees

When I was teaching science at school, in my curriculum I included the topic of "what do we need for our survival". We usually brain stormed for all things we need and use, i.e.. as roads, houses, food, water and, of course, spaces such as parks for holidays etc. Then I used to give the students a piece of paper and say "this is the earth, it is finite, it will not grow any bigger and you, as managers, allocate a piece of it for each of the the things we use and spaces we need for

farming, quarrying, forests, mining, roads etc." I was always amused as the kids used to run out of the earth and had to cut off bits from their allocations. This was many years ago. The method I used was rather simple. Today the amount of land we need to support the way we live is calculated and the result called an ecological footprint.

On 13th of April, on 'Earthbeat' there was a very interesting interview with Professor Bill Rees who developed the concept of ecological footprint and wrote a book about it in mid 1990s. He is the head of Ecological Economics and Environmental Planning at the University of British Colombia in Canada.

He defined the ecological footprint simply as the amount of land and water ecosystems required to support any defined population. In America it approaches 12 hectares per capita and it is 20 times more than required in the poorest countries such as Bangladesh.

For me the most interesting part of the interview was his explanation why we tend to ignore environmental changes such as global warming and salinity etc.

When asked why we still pollute and behave badly, he said that this is due to what he calls the Easter Island Syndrome. He then explained that the "Easter Island was only populated by human beings about the year 500. Over the next thousand years, by 1500, they'd developed quite an advanced civilisation, and most of us know it by the massive statues that line the coast. But within a couple of hundred years of achieving this extremely advanced civilisation, the Easter Island population had collapsed from somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000 down to about 2,000 people. So why is it that a culture on a tiny island, that was totally dependent on the wood, cut down the last tree. They could clearly see the end coming, and yet they continued to act in ways that led ultimately, within a very short period of time, to the collapse of a civilisation that had built up over a thousand years. And indeed, if you look at that as a model, we know that at least seven or eight major human civilisations have gone through a similar cycle.

And the question is, are we about to do the same thing? And I think part of the answer is why do we go through this cycle? It's because we tend to create cultural myths, we pretend it cannot happen to us, and this puts us into a state of deep denial. And right now, the cultural myth that I think has seduced most of us is the idea that unlimited economic growth is possible in a finite planet, that technology will bail us out of any problems we might get into, that nothing should interfere with the capacity to increase forever our consumption, and indeed we can extend this to everybody else on the planet.

Now many people find that a very comfortable myth, but there's lots of people out there who are willing to keep promoting it. Notably again, economists, who believe in something called the Principle of Near Perfect Substitution that just given appropriate market responses, human technology will substitute for any good or service provided by nature, and therefore to quote one of them, 'The disappearance of any resource is merely an event, not a catastrophe'. This is our current cultural myth. It's one that we find satisfying because it enables us to deny the importance of any environmental problems. Because of global trade, we've created a global market system in which the wealthiest people can continue to appropriate the ecological output of the rest of the world.

So we see for example in my part of the world, to replace or to substitute for the natural fishery, we're now going in to marine farming, salmon farming in particular, but to support our salmon farms, we feed them on pellets made from fish caught in the South Pacific Ocean. So we have an industry then substituting for a resource that used to be provided by nature, but instead of having fish called salmon running around the North Pacific collecting food and growing themselves, we've got a huge fossil powered fleet of fish boats in the South Pacific catching fish which are then converted into a much smaller stock of salmon produced in the North. So here we see a rich country like Canada exploiting the southern oceans to produce a smaller quantity of fish to preserve the illusion that we can continue to have salmon even though we've destroyed the natural resources.

So there's an example of Canada, and by the way, Europe and Australia and other places, extending their ecological footprints into the relatively less explored parts of the world. We shelter ourselves from the decline of our own resource base by exploiting the resources of others."

If you would like to read his interview in full you can get it from the net ABC Radio National Earthbeat 13th of April, 2002. His book is entitled :
Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth
Authors: Mathis Wackerman & William Rees
Price: $37.95
Publisher: New Society Publishers.

Wild Plants of the Ballarat Area

The talk advertised for the May general meeting had to be cancelled at short notice. However, Peter Johnson, who was one of the planned speakers breached the gap by introducing a CD that will serve as a model for a project undertaken at present by the the Department of Natural Resources and Environment in conjunction with the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club.

The CD demonstrated by Peter on the night is called 'Wild Plants of the Ballarat Area' and, among many other features, it pictures all plant species in the specified area.
So, if the user knows the name of a plant, it will have a matching picture. This would be a comprehensive substitute for local field guides when preparing for field excursions.
If the name of a particular plant is entered, the program can pinpoint where it it found, with an accuracy down to a 2 minute grid (2.5 - 3km in dimension).
Similarly, grids or 2 minute size or bigger can be searched and a species list for that area produced.

Apart from the distribution of plants, other maps feature topography, major towns and annual rainfall for example and any of these can be overlaid on the plant distribution map (this way any patterns of distribution may be hypothesised). Landsat image are also available to look for larger scale patterns.

There will be several layers of information available, some will not be present in the public version of the CD. For example, the exact locations of rare and endangered plants will not be available to the public but will be accessible in the DNRE version.

Such a CD, for the Bendigo region, would be particularly useful for our club; it could, for example, add strength to submissions of the club and local LandCare groups with regards to rare plants, feral animals, weeds etc.

When Peter attempted to demonstrate the weed distribution maps, using blackberry as an example, the computer froze.....perhaps there is just too much of it.

It sounds like an interesting project. Bill Holsworth and Rod Orr have been involved with it so far and they can be consulted for any further details. Thanks to Peter Johnson for coming up with this presentation at a moment's notice.

Local Excursion for Field Naturalists

Where:	Mandurang State Forest *rain, hail or shine*
When:	**Sunday 16th June**
Meet:	10.00 BFNC club rooms or 10.15 Intersection of Diamond Hill and Kangaroo Gully Roads
Bring:	Morning tea and Thermos, lunch for BBQ (BBQ provided), sturdy footwear, raincoat, warm clothing, comfortable seat, binoculars, magnifying glass, reference books and children or grand children (optional).
Contact:	Maurie Lewis, ph. 0407 427179 or Kerrie Norris, ph. 54478017
General:	The chosen location for this excursion is typical of the surrounding Box and Ironbark forests. It demonstrates evidence of several forms of historical and current land uses and abuses. We expect to locate and observe a variety of fauna and flora specie which contribute to making these forests so special. What better spot to share good company and knowledge of our environment.

In case of rain, a tarpaulin will be available to lunch under. Car pooling is recommended.
Serious birders may wish to arrive a bit earlier to ensure a healthy list! Contact Kerrie for details.

From the Mailbag
Author: Elaine Mathison

Each month the club receives a number of newsletters and magazines: some by subscription and some in exchange for Whirrakee. These are available from the club library.

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THE VICTORIAN NATURALIST(FNCV)
April 2002

- A Herpetofauna Survey of the Victorian Alpine Region: a wide ranging survey of the reptiles and frogs in this area was conducted in 2001. Also discusses the threats to the species recorded.

- The Mammals of Parker River Inlet, Otway National Park: two of the many species found in this area are rare and restricted in Victoria. The variety of mammals recorded are due to the abundant flora.

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NATURE AUSTRALIA(Aust. Museum)
Autumn 2002

"Stirring the Possum" by David Lindenmeyer points out that the survival of the Leadbeater's Possum depends on our ability to develop ecologically sustainable logging practices. Both the way the forest is cut and the current rate of harvesting have major negative impacts on this endangered species.

"Singing Giants Change Their Tune" by Michael Noad reports that Humpback Whale songs are beautifully complex and the more scientists learn about them, the more intriguing the questions become.

"Stalking the Stork" by Eric Dorfman outlines the search for reasons for the decline of the Jabiru in New South Wales. Australia's only stork was once a common sight around Sydney.

"The Frog with the Midas Looks" by Frank Lemckert describes the striking Giant Barred Frog with its black-and-yellow marbled back, golden eyes, and "barred" back legs. It is found in wet sclerophyll forest and rain forest in New South Wales and Queensland.

- "Fowl Play": the Barn Owl and its "bionic grappling irons".

- "Rare and Endangered": the Lord Howe Island giant stick insect.

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THE BIRD OBSERVER(BOCA)
April 2002

- Australian Magpies: nests, behaviour, plumage changes.

- My Orange-bellied Parrot Experience: two weeks at Birch's Inlet, Tasmania.

- Birds in Fiji: the effect of human settlement on the Fijian bird population.

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Also received recently:

*Castlemaine Naturalist(CFNC)
May 2002

*Ballarat Naturalist(BFNC)
May 2002

*Geelong Naturalist(GFNC)
May 2002

*Field Nats News(FNCV)
May 2002

*Land for Wildlife News
March/April 2002

*Envirobusiness Update
April 2002

*Fungimap Newsletter 16
April 2002

*Australian Landcare
March 2002

*Canopy(Parks Victoria)
April 2002

*Swifts across the Strait
February 2002

- This is the newsletter of the Swift Parrot recovery program.

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Tasmanian Tiger Cloning Breakthrough, May 28, 2002

News release from:
http://www.amonline.net.au/thylacine/newsrelease.htm

After more than two years of ongoing cloning research, the Australian Museum has overcome a crucial obstacle in its continuing efforts to bring back to life the extinct Tasmanian Tiger.

In May 2002 the Evolutionary Biology Unit at the Australian Museum in Sydney successfully replicated individual Tasmanian Tiger genes using a process known as PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction). These new discoveries and the story of the Museum's ongoing efforts have been exclusively documented by the Discovery Channel in The End of Extinction: Cloning the Tasmanian Tiger, premiering in 155 countries world-wide, including Australia, on July 7 at 7.30pm.

This remarkable journey which hopes to turn science fiction into science fact began in 1999 when the Australian Museum embarked on a never-before-attempted project to bring back an extinct species.

The last known Tasmanian Tiger, or Thylacine, died in captivity in 1936, but a team of biologists believe the animal's extinction may simply be a 70-year hiccup.

In 1999 DNA was successfully extracted from an ethanol preserved Tasmanian Tiger pup sample. Additional DNA has been extracted from two other individual pups in 2001. These other tissue sources included bone, tooth, bone marrow and dried muscle.

The most significant breakthrough to date has been the replication of individual Tasmanian Tiger genes using the PCR process. These PCRs show that short fragments of the DNA are undamaged and undoubtedly Tasmanian Tiger DNA, and that there is no reason why these should not work in a living cell.

"The Australian Museum is absolutely delighted with yet another major breakthrough in the cloning project," said Professor Mike Archer, Director of the Australian Museum. "This technique was an extremely critical step in producing sufficient amounts of Tasmanian Tiger DNA to proceed with the research and extremely good news for future steps in accomplishing this project."

The next stage is to make large quantity copies of all the genes of the Tasmanian Tiger so these can be used to construct synthetic chromosomes.

A Conversation with Professor Mike Archer, Director of the Australian Museum

from the Australian Museum website
www.amonline.net.au/thylacine

How did you get involved in this project? What started you on the road to such an amazing endeavor?

I have always been interested in extinct species, having become obsessed with fossils when I was 11 years old. But in this case, there was a triple induction. After I returned to Australia in 1967, I began a PhD on Australia's carnivorous marsupials and in that arena, the Tasmanian Tiger is the supreme flesh-eater about which we knew the least. It was an animal of almost total mystery. The third reason was my excitement when I first realised there was a 'pickled pup' in the collections of the Australian Museum. That started me thinking nearly 15 years ago about the 'unthinkable' - the potential of using its DNA to bring it back, before there were Dollys, cloned human insulin and other things to suggest it was other than a mad dream.

What makes this project different from all other cloning projects?

There are many things that make this project different. First, it focuses on a fascinating but only recently extinct marsupial. Second, it sets out to redress our immoral actions when we wilfully and wrongly exterminated this animal. Third, it faces so many technological challenges that the science of this project will immediately be up front in a whole range of new and exciting areas.

What stage are you currently at in your attempts to clone the Tasmanian Tiger?

Having found DNA and isolated it (no easy tasks that some told us would be impossible), we are now engaged in efforts to replicate and sequence sections of the genome in anticipation of creating a genetic library of Tasmanian Tiger DNA. This is another big challenge, but one we have already begun to have success with!

What has been the most extraordinary discovery made through your work on this project?

That's a trick question because we have been working on two fronts. On the one hand, we have been searching for and finding 25-12 million-year-old ancestral Tasmanian Tigers from the stratigraphic sequence of World Heritage fossil deposits of Riversleigh in north-western Queensland - very exciting stuff with more than seven different kinds having been found and named already! Second, of course, our geneticists Drs. Don Colgan and Karen Firestone have been pushing the frontiers of research with non-modern DNA - and every new breakthrough in this field brings us just that much closer to what could eventually be a technological miracle.

What are the scientific implications of the discoveries you have made through this research?

Well, already we've overcome obstacles that critics tossed up in front of us, saying these couldn't be overcome. That simple fact has much broader implications in terms of the attitudes scientists have when challenged to do something that has never been done before. Some step out in front and lead even if they're not sure it will work; others for whatever reason hang behind and too often criticise those who try to lead. I have never been particularly good at taking advice from people too quick to tell me what we can't do - particularly if no one has ever tried. I often wonder why centuries of egg on faces hasn't taught us greater caution about making declarations about what is 'impossible.' Lord Kelvin, a noted scientist in his own right, declared in 1895 that there was no possibility that a heavier-than-air machine could fly - just a few years before the first plane roared overhead. Dolly too was an 'impossibility' that refused to stay impossible. The Tasmanian Tiger Project has already been adding more examples of this kind, and it is pleasing to see that several early critics of the project are now less critical and more interested in the possibilities. That said, however, it is important to realize that we know we may not succeed. Yet, however far we get, we know we will have produced exciting new science and left more solid bricks on a foundation that can be built upon by the next group that picks up this challenge.

What are the moral implications of cloning an extinct species as opposed to an existing species?

I'm not big on cosmic morality, believing it to be very much a personal and subjective matter, often culture-specific. But in this case, most people agree that the 'immoral' act' was extermination of the Tasmanian Tiger in the first place; to bring it back, if we can, would be to me a moral imperative aimed at undoing that black act. Most churches agree. Even a poll run on the internet in the United States, a country traditionally conservative about things like genetic engineering, was highly supportive of the Tasmanian Tiger Project with more than 75 percent of respondents in favour. Some Biblical fundamentalists have accused us of 'playing God,' a view which I reject utterly for the reasons just noted. In contrast, other more mainstream theists draw attention to the fact that the teachings of Jesus are about giving life, not taking it away. There are even Biblical comments that could be cited as encouragement for this project such as The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (New Testament, 1 Corinthians, Chapter 15, verse 26).

What will the social impact be in bringing the Tasmanian Tiger back to life?

For the Tasmanian Tiger's social life (because if we can bring back one, we can bring back a population – there are other specimens), it will be one heck of a stimulus! But what social impact will it have on us? Enormous I would have thought. To name just a few, tourism to Tasmania would massively increase, if the project against all odds is successful and Tasmania is where Tasmanian Tigers are re-established. To actually reverse extinction, even if it is in just this one special instance, would be the biological equivalent of the first walk on the moon – something thought to be way beyond dreams. And, like the moon walk, it would do extraordinary things to kids' brains. They will be far more inclined to look beyond present limits, beyond prohibitions, to dare to try things that

may result in equally awesome leaps in human capacity.

What did you think of the animatronic Tasmanian Tiger featured in the film?

I want one – until the real thing can make a reappearance!

There is controversy about whether or not the Tasmanian Tiger is still alive. How do you feel about this?
Sadly unconvinced. Without a single hair, dropping or any tangible evidence, I have to remain skeptical. Sightings, which most of the evidence is based on, are personal experiences and can't be put to the test. But I have met many very bright and genuine believers such as Col Bailey who has researched hundreds of sightings. He almost had me convinced when we went wandering together through the bush where they were once known to abound. It's not hard to imagine one is watching you as you walk. And no one would be happier than me to be proved wrong and Col (Bailey) right - it would be fantastic! But until someone can produce the incontrovertible material evidence, I feel a moral obligation to keep our Tasmanian Tiger Project on the rails. Let's see who comes up with one first; it matters little to me who succeeds so long as in my lifetime, these beautiful marsupials are once again back in the world - and I can see one!

Bird Brain

from the ABC 'Catalyst' website
http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/stories/s569163.htm

Reporter: Jonica Newby
Producer: Naomi Lumsdaine
Researcher: Robyn Smith
This 'Catalyst' prorgam went to air on Thursday, 30 May 2002

If you thought being called a bird brain was an insult, meet Alex Pepperberg. He's an African Grey parrot who1s proving birds are much smarter than we've ever given them credit for.

Alex has over 50 words for different objects, can name seven colours, can count to six, and can combine all these ideas in a meaningful way his language abilities are equivalent to those of a 2 year old child and he has the problem solving skills of a 6 year old.

But Alex is not the only bird with brains. The more scientists study birds in the wild, the more they realise anything a mammal can do, a bird can do too. So the huge question remains how do they manage the same level of intelligence as a chimpanzee or dolphin, with a brain the size of a walnut? Birds are forcing us to reassess everything we thought we knew about how brains produce intelligence.

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Speaker Syllabus for General Meetings 2002– Second Wednesday 8:00 pm

Please check each **WHIRRAKEE** for additional events or changes. If a workshop is planned, it will start at 7:00pm. The speaker will be introduced at 8:00 pm.

Date - 2001	Topic	Speaker
12 June	Monitoring Changes in Box-Ironbark Forests	Ern Perkins
10 July	Trust for Nature and its Conservation Activities	Michael Looker
14 August	Spineless Wonders - an Introduction to the Importance of Invertebrates	Dr Alan Yuen
11 September	***Annual General Meeting***	
9 October	Grevillea Hunting Around Australia	Neil Marriott
13 November	What has been achieved in Waterways Management in the NC Region	Greg Peters
11 December	**Christmas Dinner**	

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Fauna Study Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meeting

Wednesday, June 12 7.00pm
Note earlier starting time
The workshop for the 12th June 2002, will be "Bird Bits - External Bird Morphology".
It will be conducted by Glenise Moors and will start at 7pm.
Ern Perkins, who has been very active in the box-ironbark campaign, will talk about 'Monitoring Changes in Box-Ironbark Forests'.
His talk will start at 8.00pm.

Fauna Study Group

Wednesday, June 26 7.30pm
Leadbeaters Possum - Speaker to be confirmed

Other meetings planned so far:

July 24	Mountain Pygmy Possum - Kerrie Norris
August 28	Frogs by Night - on location at Kangaroo Flat Botanical Garden
September 25	A.G.M. - topic of interest to be announced.

Bird Observers Group

This group meets (in the clubrooms) on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm. Next meetings are on:

Wednesday, June 5 7.30pm
Topic: : Little Terns Breeding Project – Nelson
Guest: Bev Porteous – Bev has been a volunteer monitor for the past two breeding seasons of the endangered shore bird species, Little Tern. The colony on the Glenelg River estuary, besides coping with the natural elements to successfully breed, requires data to be collected and enforceable policies created to protect them from recreation beach users.

Excursions

On **Sunday 16th June**, a Field Naturalists excursion has been organised to the Mandurang State Forest *rain, hail or shine....*
Meet at 10.00am at the BFNC club rooms or at 10.15am at the intersection of Diamond Hill and Kangaroo Gully Roads.
For details and contact phone numbers see pg 5.

Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th August
Swift Parrot Survey
Contact: Matthew Comer
(ph 5432 2380 for details)

Saturday 24th August
Spring Gully Reservoir
Meet: 9.00am Shakespeare Street gate
Contact: Glenise Moors
(ph 5439 6254 for details)

Future Excursion

Could people interested in a day excursion to Healesville Sanctuary (for a behind-the- scenes tour) please contact Maurie Lewis (0407 427179) or Bill Holsworth (5443 4063)

The Tasmanian Experience
by the Australian Naturalists Network

This year's ANN *GetTogether* in Tasmania will be happening November 9-18, 2002. The core program is based in Launceston, with pre-meeting activities centred around the North-East/East Coast (November 6-9) and post-meeting activities around North-West/West Coast (November 19-22).
See April *Whirrakee* for details.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.
W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals.
It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Natural Resources and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433